



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

1<sup>st</sup> August 2018

*Jew Constituent*

**RE: PERSONAL INDEPENDENCE PAYMENT ASSESSMENT PROVIDERS.**

Thank you for contacting me recently about personal independence payment (PIP) assessment providers; your comments upon which I read with great interest.

PIP assessments are designed to properly reflect the impact a person's disability has on their everyday life. Assessments must be performed by trained health professionals (HPs), who must be fully registered doctors, Level 1 nurses, paramedics, occupational therapists, or physiotherapists, and have at least two years' post-full registration experience. They also undergo comprehensive training in disability analysis, which includes a 'functional evaluation' as to how medical conditions affect an individual's ability to perform day-to-day activities. Before carrying out assessments, HPs routinely refresh their knowledge of any condition with which they are not fully familiar. HPs make recommendations to decision makers at the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), who will take into account all available evidence, including evidence provided by the claimant's GP or consultant.

HPs and Decision Makers do not have performance targets with regard to the number of people qualifying. The PIP assessment process has been extensively reviewed to ensure that it is robust, the claims process is as straightforward as possible, and decisions are made based on the evidence provided.

Since PIP was introduced, only 8 percent of initial decisions have gone to appeal and only 4 percent have been overturned. When cases are overturned, it is usually because new evidence is submitted which was not previously supplied. Mandatory Reconsiderations have been introduced to give claimants the opportunity to have their decision reviewed much sooner than at appeal. While this reform is working, the DWP is reviewing its processes to ensure that it does gather all the relevant evidence ahead of any appeal hearing.

The DWP expects the highest standards from the contractors who carry out PIP assessments and works closely with them to ensure PIP is working in the best way possible.

Finally, recently, following an Urgent Question on the withdrawal of some appeals in relation to Personal Independence Payment (PIP) claimants, I asked the Secretary of State for the Department for Work and Pensions whether there is a formal review process in place for assessments that can be responsive to any trends or issues that might arise. In her answer, the Secretary of State highlighted that, to get the assessment process right, it is being constantly reassessed and the Department for Work and Pensions has introduced informative videos, special software, improved guidance for GPs and healthcare professionals, and improved communications, and they will continue to reassess the assessments to ensure they are the best they can be.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.



with deep waters,

*Tom*

**TOM PURSGLOVE MP  
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT  
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**